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#CopenhagenLTC

Lantern Theater Company Presents *Copenhagen* by Michael Frayn, Jan. 11 – Feb. 11, 2018

The Lantern's Ongoing Exploration of Science Meets The Greatest Play Ever Written About Science

PHILADELPHIA (December 27, 2017) – **Lantern Theater Company** continues its 24th season with **Michael Frayn's** award-winning play *Copenhagen*. Considered the greatest play ever written about science and winner of two Tony Awards including Best Play, Frayn's riveting drama puts us in the heart of the greatest moral dilemma of the 20th century. **Kittson O'Neill** will make her Lantern directorial debut, working with cast members **Charles McMahon, Sally Mercer, and Paul L. Nolan**. Theater critics and members of the press are invited to attend **opening night on Wednesday, January 17 at 7 p.m.** *A full schedule is included in the fact sheet below.*

Copenhagen continues the Lantern's ongoing exploration of science and the ways in which science reflects humanity's most pressing concerns. Frayn's play explores a fascinating mystery: why did German physicist Werner Heisenberg visit his old mentor and Danish counterpart Niels Bohr in 1941 while their countries were at war? Was he looking for clues to atomic secrets, asking for absolution, or searching for something unknowable? As the characters wrestle with their memories and motives, what becomes clear is the ultimate uncertainty of why we do what we do.

Frayn uses the mystery of Heisenberg and Bohr's historical meeting in Nazi-occupied Denmark to create a living metaphor of Heisenberg's uncertainty principle in which the storytelling itself changes the story being told. Both a cerebral thriller about nuclear physics and a morality play about scientific responsibility,

Copenhagen is also a profoundly moving meditation on the uncertainty of human motivation and the infinite mystery of a universe we grapple unavailingly to understand.

“Structured as an elaborate thought experiment, Frayn’s remarkable play draws a compelling parallel between the impenetrable mysteries at the core of matter and the ultimate unknowability of human motivation,” said Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahan**, who also stars in the production as German physicist Werner Heisenberg. “Each time the characters examine a pivotal event in their lives, the memory changes, and as one circumstance emerges more clearly, another dissolves into a tantalizing field of ambiguity.”

The Lantern will further explore the world of *Copenhagen* with **Lantern Searchlight**, available online at www.lanterntheater.org/searchlight. Published articles will include a primer on theoretical physics, the groundbreaking work of Heisenberg and Bohr and their mysterious 1941 meeting, the neuroscience of memory, the race to build the atomic bomb, and the famed personalities within the physics community in the years leading up to World War II. New content will be added throughout the production’s run.

Tickets for *Copenhagen* are \$26 – \$43 and are available online at www.lanterntheater.org or by calling the Lantern Box Office at **(215) 829-0395**. Student tickets are \$15 in advance; \$10 student rush tickets are available ten minutes before curtain with valid ID. Discounts are also available for theater industry professionals (\$10 in advance or at the door), seniors 65 and up, groups of 10 or more, and U.S. military personnel. Lantern Theater Company is located at St. Stephen's Theater, 10th & Ludlow Sts. in Center City Philadelphia.

About the Playwright

Born in London in 1933, **Michael Frayn** is today regarded as one of the most important living playwrights in the English language. He began his career as an award-winning journalist and has since enjoyed equally successful careers as a playwright, novelist, and translator. His best known plays are *Noises Off* and *Copenhagen*; the latter premiered at London’s Royal National Theatre and received the 1998 Evening Standard Award for Best Play of the Year and the 2000 Tony Award for Best Play. In addition to a vast and diverse output of his own award-winning plays, novels, and screenplays, Frayn has also translated a number of works from Russian, including plays by Chekhov and Tolstoy. Frayn once wrote of his plays, “what they are all about in one way or another is the way in which we impose our ideas upon the world around us.” It has been noted that the conflict between the objective universe and humanity’s often helpless attempts to give it order underlies almost everything Frayn has ever written.

About the Director

Making her Lantern directorial debut with *Copenhagen*, **Kittson O'Neill** has appeared on the Lantern stage in *Informed Consent*, *Arcadia*, and *New Jerusalem*. She currently serves as artistic director for Shakespeare in Clark Park (SCP) and artistic associate for InterAct Theatre Company, where she runs the company's Core Playwrights Program. Her directing credits include productions with SCP, Hedgerow Theatre, and the world premiere of *A Knee That Can Bend* at Orbiter 3 for which she received a Barrymore nomination for Outstanding Direction of a Play. O'Neill's acting credits include theater and film, including local productions with InterAct, Hedgerow, Inis Nua Theatre Company, and Act II Playhouse, and a role in M. Night Shyamalan's forthcoming film, *Glass*.

About the Cast and Production Team

Originally produced by the Lantern during the company's 2003/04 season, the original *Copenhagen* cast will return for this all-new production helmed by O'Neill.

Charles McMahon stars as German physicist **Werner Heisenberg** (1901-1976, one of the key pioneers of quantum mechanics). McMahon co-founded the Lantern in 1994 and serves as artistic director in addition to acting, directing, and writing for the company. His Lantern acting credits include The Poet u/s in *An Iliad*, Heisenberg in *Copenhagen*, Lucky in *Waiting for Godot*, Guildenstern in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, Edmund in *King Lear*, and Pete Seeger in the world premiere of *Un-American*. He has directed all but one of the Lantern's Shakespeare productions to date, including this season's upcoming production of *The Tempest* and recent productions of *Coriolanus* and *As You Like It*. McMahon's writing credits include his original play *Oscar Wilde: From the Depths*, produced by the Lantern in 2016, and co-creator of an original adaptation of Dylan Thomas' *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, which was honored with two 2014 Barrymore Awards and five nominations, including a nomination for Outstanding New Play.

Sally Mercer stars as **Margrethe Nørlund Bohr** (1890-1984, Niels Bohr's wife and an integral part of his work). Her long list of acting credits includes recent appearances as Madame Arcanti in *Blithe Spirit* at the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, Mrs. Medlock in *The Secret Garden* at Arden Theatre Company, and Claire in *The Uncanny Valley* at InterAct Theatre Company.

Paul L. Nolan stars as Danish physicist **Niels Bohr** (1885-1962, credited with foundational contributions to understanding atomic structure and quantum theory, for which he received the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1922). Nolan's Lantern stage credits include this season's world premiere of *The Craftsman*, in which he starred as distinguished art critic Abraham Bredius. His acting career spans more than 40 years, including local productions of *The Long Christmas Ride Home*, *The Hothouse*, *The Mousetrap*, *Other Desert Cities*, *Hamlet*, *Of*

Mice and Men, Richard III, August: Osage County, and The Birthday Party, and film and television appearances in *The Wire, Homicide, Ocean's Eleven, Contact*, and *Signs*.

The design team for *Copenhagen* includes scenic designer **Nick Embree** (*New Jerusalem, The Island*, and *Copenhagen*), costume designer **Natalia de la Torre** (*Informed Consent, An Iliad*, and upcoming *The Tempest*), lighting designer **Robin Stamey** (Lantern debut; also serving as production manager for *Copenhagen*), and sound designer **Daniel Perelstein** (*The Beauty Queen of Leenane, The Island*, and *Romeo and Juliet*).

About Lantern Theater Company

Founded in 1994, Lantern Theater Company launched the 2017/18 season with a record number of subscribers, its largest-ever operating budget at \$1.5 million, and a growing community of theater artists engaged in its productions and audience enrichment events. The Lantern's innovative **Theater Artist Fair Pay Initiative** was featured in *American Theatre* magazine as a leading national success story for increasing artist compensation through a combination of fundraising and higher ticket sales. The Lantern seeks to be a vibrant, contributing member of its community, exposing audiences to great theater, inviting participation in dialogue and discussion, engaging audience members on artistic and social issues, and employing theatrical language and techniques to enrich learning in the classroom. Since the inception of the Barrymore Awards for Excellence in Theatre in 1995, the Lantern has been recognized with 96 nominations and 19 awards, including the 2009 Barrymore Award for Excellence in Theatre Education and Community Service. Following *Copenhagen*, the Lantern's 2017/18 season continues with *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare and the Philadelphia premiere of *Don't Dress for Dinner* by Marc Camoletti and adapted by Robin Hawdon. More information is online at www.lanterntheater.org.

FACT SHEET

Copenhagen

WRITTEN BY:
Michael Frayn

DIRECTED BY:
Kittson O'Neill

CAST:
Charles McMahon as Werner Heisenberg
Sally Mercer as Margrethe Nørlund Bohr
Paul L. Nolan as Niels Bohr

PRODUCTION TEAM:
Robin Stamey, Production Manager & Lighting Designer
Nick Embree, Scenic Designer
Natalia de la Torre, Costume Designer
Daniel Perelstein, Sound Designer
Rebecca Smith, AEA Stage Manager
Nicole Miller Marks, Assistant Director

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TICKET INFORMATION:
Online: www.lanterntheater.org
By Phone: (215) 829-0395
In Person: Lantern Box Office, 10th & Ludlow Streets, Philadelphia, PA 19107

TICKET PRICING:
Tickets are \$26 – \$43
Discounts available for students, seniors, military, and groups of 10 or more

PREVIEWS:
Thursday, January 11 at 7 p.m.
Friday, January 12 at 8 p.m.
Saturday, January 13 at 8 p.m.
Sunday, January 14 at 2 p.m.
Tuesday, January 16 at 6:30 p.m.

OPENING:
Wednesday, January 17 at 7 p.m.

REGULAR RUN:
Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. on January 23 and January 30 (*no performance on February 6*)
Wednesday at 2 p.m. on January 24 [AIC], January 31 [AIC], and February 7

Wednesday at 7 p.m. on January 24, January 31, and February 7
Thursday at 7 p.m. on January 18, January 25, February 1, and February 8
Friday at 8 p.m. on January 19, January 26 [PUB], February 2, and February 9
Saturday at 2 p.m. on January 20 and January 27
Saturday at 8 p.m. on January 20, January 27, February 3, and February 10
Sunday at 2 p.m. on January 21 [AIC], January 28 [AIC], February 4, and February 11

CLOSING PERFORMANCE:

Sunday, February 11 at 2 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

▪ **[AIC] Artists in Conversation**

Moderated post-show discussions with the cast immediately follow 2 p.m. performances on Sunday, January 21; Wednesday, January 24; Sunday, January 28; and Wednesday, January 31.

▪ **[PUB] Lantern Pub Night**

Lively conversation over complimentary pub drinks immediately follows the 8 p.m. performance on Friday, January 26.

PLAY SYNOPSIS:

A fascinating mystery: why did German physicist Werner Heisenberg visit his old mentor and Danish counterpart Niels Bohr in 1941 while their countries were at war? Was he looking for clues to atomic secrets, asking for absolution, or searching for something unknowable? As the characters wrestle with their memories and motives, what becomes clear is the ultimate uncertainty of why we do what we do. Perhaps the greatest play ever written about science, Michael Frayn's riveting drama puts us in the heart of the greatest moral dilemma of the 20th century.

PERFORMANCE VENUE:

St. Stephen's Theater, 10th & Ludlow Streets, Philadelphia, PA 19107

PARKING/TRANSPORTATION:

Ample parking is available at nearby lots and garages, including The Autopark at Jefferson (10th & Ludlow Streets) and LAZ Parking (10th & Chestnut Streets). Metered street parking is available during posted hours. Venue is also accessible by taxi, SEPTA buses and trains, and the PATCO Speedline.